

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINS, PE

SUBJECT: STRIKES AND STRIKE THREATS

REF: 77 LIMA 11065

1. THE MONTH OLD STRIKE OF OVER 30,000 EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH DRAGS ON WITHOUT RESOLUTION. THE NEW MINISTER OF HEALTH, SCAR DAVILA ZUMAETA, RECENTLY ANNOUNCED OPTIMISTICALLY THAT A SOLUTION WAS IN SIGHT BUT THE STRIKE CONTINUES THIS WEEK ALTHOUGH WORKERS HAVE REDUCED THEIR WAGE DEMANDS SOMEWHAT. MEANWHILE A PARTIAL WORK STOPPAGE HAS SLOWED BUT NOT CLOSED SIDER PERU (GOVERNMENT STEELMILL). IN CHMBOTE. ABOUT HALF THE BULE COLLAR WORKERS, ALONG WITH A SMALLER PERCENT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, MAINTAIN THEIR MONTH-LONG STRIKE SEEKING HIGHER WAGES AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE REHIRING OF 54 WORKERS FIRED AFTER LAST JULY'S GENERAL STRIKE.

2. THE COMMUNIST LABOR CONFEDERATION, CGTP, HAD CALLED IN DECEMBER FOR A GENERAL STRIKE JANUARY 23-24. ALTHOUGH THE LEFTIST MAGAZINE MARKA CLAIMS SUPPORT EXISTS OUTSIDE THE CGTP FOR THE NATIONA-WIDE DEMONSTRATION MANY LABOR LEADRS WERE EXPRESSING DOUBTS THIS WEEK THAT THIS MASS PROTEST EFFORT WOULD SUCCEED. THE NEW MINISTER OF LABOR, JOSE GARICA CALDERSON KOECHLIN,
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MET JANUARY 5 WITH LEADERS OF THE GOVERNMENT CREATED LABOR CONFEDERATION, CTRP, THE COMMUNIST CONFEDERATION, CGTP, AND THE APRA-RELATED CTP. ACCORDING TO THE PRESSN AT LEAST, THE MEETING ENDED WITH ALL THE LABOR LEADERS PROMISING TO REPUDIATE PUBLICLY ANY INTNETION OF STRIKING. IN TURN, MINISTER GACRICA CALDERON PROMISED REGULAR MONTLY MEETINGS WITH THE UNION HEADS IN ORDER TO ARRANGE A MORE RAPID AND DIRECT RESPONSE TO WORKER

PROBLEMS.

4. COMMENT. APPARENTLY MINISTER CALDERSON'S INITIATIVES WERE WELL RECEIVED ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE CGTP WILL DROP ITS CALL FOR AGENRAL STRIKE. HOWEVER, THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO CUT SUBSIDIES, RAISE GAS PRICES OR FREEZE SALARIES COULD STILL TOUCH OFF SIGNIFICANT RANK-AND-FILE PROTESTS.

SHLAUDEMAM

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